

*Administration of Barack H. Obama, 2010*

**Remarks Following a Meeting With Prime Minister David Cameron of the United Kingdom in Toronto, Canada**

*June 26, 2010*

*President Obama.* Let me begin by saying that the last conversation I had with David Cameron was before the—well, I guess it wasn't the last one, but a recent conversation was before the match between the United States and England at the World Cup. And since it ended in a tie, we are exchanging—and paying off our debts at the same time—this is Goose Island 312 beer from my hometown of Chicago, and, David, I understand this is—

*Prime Minister Cameron.* This is Hobgoblin from the Wychwood brew in Witney, in my constituency.

*President Obama.* And so I advised him that in America, we drink our beer cold. [Laughter] So he has to put this in the refrigerator before he drinks it, but I think he will find it outstanding. And I'm happy to give that a shot, although I will not drink it warm.

*Prime Minister Cameron.* It's my pleasure to send you—you can have it cold, it's all right. [Laughter]

*President Obama.* All right.

*Prime Minister Cameron.* But—

*President Obama.* Cheers.

*Prime Minister Cameron.* Any way you like. Thank you very much.

*President Obama.* Now, I want to say that all of us in the United States deeply value the special relationship between the United States and the United Kingdom. And we have been very impressed with the leadership that David Cameron has shown thus far. He has, I think, taken a series of steps on some very tough issues and clearly is prepared to make difficult decisions on behalf of his vision for his country.

We already, I think, have established a strong working relationship, as have our teams. And we are confident that that special relationship is only going to get stronger in the months and years to come.

We had an excellent conversation, building on—off of the conversations that we've had at the G-8 about the world economy and the importance of our two countries focusing both on the issues of growth, but also on the issues of financial consolidation, that we have long-term debts that have to be dealt with and we have to address them.

There are going to be differentiated responses between the two countries because of our different positions, but we are aiming at the same direction, which is long-term, sustainable growth that puts people to work.

At the same time, we had an extensive discussion about Afghanistan and the alignment between our two countries in recognizing we have a serious threat to our safety and security that has to be addressed in this region; that we recognize the enormous sacrifices that both British troops and U.S. troops have been making for some time now, but we are convinced that we have the right strategy to provide the time and the space for the Afghan Government to

build up capacity over the next several months and years. And this period that we're in right now is going to be critical both on the political front and on the military front, and there's going to be extremely close consultation between our two countries so that we can create a situation in which Afghanistan and Pakistan are able to maintain their effective security and those areas are not able to be used as launching pads for attacks against our people.

We also discussed Iran, and I thanked David for his stalwart support of the United Nations Security Resolution 1929, the toughest sanctions that have been imposed on the Iranian Government through the United Nations Security Council. We now have to make sure that we follow up in terms of implementation, and that was a major discussion point.

And the key conclusion that we take out of this last day of conversations, and I suspect this will continue through the evening and tomorrow, is that on foreign policy issues, the United States and the United Kingdom are not only aligned in theory but aligned in fact; that we see the world in a similar way; we continue to share the same concerns and also see the same strategic possibilities.

And so I think this partnership is built on a rock-solid foundation and it's only going to get stronger in the years to come. So thank you, David.

And I think that may have been my phone going off, so I'm going to—[*laughter*].

*Prime Minister Cameron.* I'm glad it wasn't mine. [*Laughter*]

Well, thank you very much for that, and thank you for what you said about the relationship between our two countries, which I believe is incredibly strong, but as you say, I think can get stronger in the years ahead.

We've had some very good conversations at the G-8 and a very good meeting here today. I think particularly on the issue of Afghanistan, which is the number-one foreign policy and security policy priority for my Government, making progress this year, putting everything we have into getting it right this year, is vitally important. And we've had very good conversations on that.

And as you said, Barack, on all the issues we discussed over the weekend so far—the Middle East peace process, Iran, how we take those forward, and the key relationships that we have in the Gulf and elsewhere—we have a very close alignment, and I think we can work together, and we want to support the work that's being done.

On the economy, you rightly say we have a big deficit problem which we have to address. But of course we want to do it in a way that encourages growth, and that's why we're focusing on spending reductions rather than on big tax increases. And I think that's the right approach to take.

And as we go into the G-20, I think we can explain that we're aiming at the same target, which is world growth and stability, but it means those countries that have big deficit problems like ours have to take action in order to keep that level of confidence in the economy, which is absolutely vital to growth, to make sure it's there.

But it's been great to have this opportunity to be meeting—and the discussions that we had at the G-8 and the G-20. And thank you also for the lift between the two. It was—he threatened to send me a bill, but as I said—[*laughter*—times are very tight in the U.K., so I'm afraid we'll have to take it as a free lift. [*Laughter*]

*President Obama.* He was a model passenger. I want everybody to know he fastened his seat belt as he was supposed to.

NOTE: The President spoke at 3:18 p.m. at the InterContinental Toronto Centre.

*Categories:* Meetings With Foreign Leaders and International Officials : United Kingdom :: Prime Minister Cameron.

*Locations:* Toronto, Canada.

*Names:* Cameron, David.

*Subjects:* Afghanistan : Afghan military and security forces; Afghanistan : Democracy efforts; Afghanistan : Reconstruction and infrastructure development; Afghanistan : Terrorism; Afghanistan : U.S. military forces :: Deployment; Canada : Group of Eight (G–8) summit in Muskoka; Canada : President Obama's visit; Commerce, international : Global financial markets :: Stabilization efforts; Commerce, international : Group of Eight (G–8) nations; Iran : U.N. Security Council sanctions; Pakistan : Counterterrorism efforts, cooperation with U.S.; Pakistan : Terrorism; South Africa : 2010 World Cup; Sports : Soccer; United Kingdom : Afghanistan :: British military forces, deployment; United Kingdom : Afghanistan :: Role in; United Kingdom : Prime Minister; United Kingdom : Relations with U.S.; United Nations : Security Council.

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